

**Application No.: 10/518,082****Docket No.: 4590-358****REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 remain pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 13-16 have been amended and new claim 18 added.

Claims 6 and 13-16 are objected to because of the noted informalities. In response, these claims have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 7, 8, 9 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Pan (U.S. 5,706,371). In response, claim 7 has been amended and is believed patentable over Pan for the reasons discussed below.

Claim 7 before entry of this Amendment, only recited one capillary tube. To further emphasize the differences between the present invention and Pan, claim 1 has been amended to add "such that said two parts are aligned with each other." The cut separates the tube in two parts. This characteristic permits to align with a great precision the two optical fibers which are positioned inside each part of the capillary tube. In Pan, the capillary tubes 12 are not aligned (see for example, Fig. 5a and 5b). For at least these reasons, claim 7 is patentable over Pan. Claims 7, 8, 9 and 17 recite additional, important limitations and should be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to Pan, as well as on their own merits. Accordingly, this anticipation rejection should be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including

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extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 21, 2006  
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